

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to an image playback apparatus and method, and a program for enabling a quick display of a last picture of moving pictures during fast forward playback as well as a first picture of the moving pictures during fast reverse playback. Concerning GOPs from a GOP at which the fast forward playback is started to a GOP[#](N-1) that is immediately prior to a last GOP[#]N, encoded video data of I-pictures is stacked in a stream buffer, whereas concerning the last GOP[#]N, the encoded video data of all frames is stacked in the stream buffer. To the last GOP[#]N, only I-pictures are decoded and displayed. Thereafter the I-picture and the P-pictures in the last GOP[#]N is decoded, and only the last picture is displayed. The present invention can be applied to DVD players or the like.